

HABS MI-213-C

NORTH BLOCK HOUSE
FORT MACKINAC, MICH

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49-MACKI

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1 Sheet

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NORTH BLOCK HOUSE OF FORT MACKINAC
Mackinac Island, Mackinac County
Michigan

OWNER: State of Michigan.

CUSTODIAN: Mackinac Island State Park Commission - Mr. Manfred
Burleigh, Chairman.

DATE OF ERECTION: 1798 to 1800.

ARCHITECT: Unknown

BUILDERS: American artisans and soldiers attached to Fort Mackinac.

PRESENT CONDITION: Poor.

MATERIALS OF CONSTRUCTION: Limestone for the basement and first
story wall and squared timbers and wood roof.

OTHER EXISTING RECORDS: No original drawings have been found.
References to Block House are contained in the inspection reports of the War Department from 1797 to 1853.

ADDITIONAL DATA: The North Block House was built by the Americans after their occupation of the fort in 1796. We know it to have been completed by December 1800 from a report written by Uriah Tracy to the Secretary of War, wherein he mentions "three strong block houses". The structure contains two stone fireplaces as it was planned for the use of non-combatants during a siege. Originally there was an entrance to the basement story from the fort side but this is now closed up. About 1880 the upper story of the Block House was used to house a water reservoir for the fort use. The old pipes are still in evidence but the load of the tank was so great that it all but demolished the stone walls. They were repaired by the National Park Service during 1934 but the whole building is still in a serious condition. The old wood beams which supported the roof and tied the structure together at the eaves were removed to accommodate the water tank and have now disappeared.

The above data was taken from a report compiled by the writer on the history of Fort Mackinac. It was prepared for the National Park Service during 1934 and entailed months of careful research.

Signed "Warren L. Rindge"
District Officer - November 10, 1936.

District Officer - May 3, 1937.